

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ANTIMONY IN THE SECOND QUARTER 2006

Consumption of primary antimony in the second quarter of 2006 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be about 4% lower than that in the first quarter of 2006 and slightly higher than that in the second quarter of 2005. During the first 5 months of 2006, China remained the leading supplier of antimony metal, ore and concentrate, and oxide to the United States.

Antimony prices continued their rise during the first part of the second quarter but then drifted lower. The Platts Metals Week New York dealer price for antimony metal started the second quarter in the range of \$2.45 to \$2.55 per pound, rose to \$2.61 to \$2.66 per pound by early May, and finished the quarter at \$2.35 to \$2.44 per pound.

In July, Straits Resources Ltd. (West Perth, Western Australia, Australia) announced plans to construct an antimony processing facility at its Hillgrove antimony-gold-tungsten mine site in Australia. The facility, which would process antimony ore into antimony metal and gold, is slated to begin operations

around June 2007. In its initial stage, the mine is projected to produce 250,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of antimony ore, and the plant would use the material as feed to produce 10,000 t/yr of antimony metal. After a few years, Straits expected to expand output to 500,000 t/yr of ore (Straits Resources Ltd., 2006).

China, the world's leading antimony producer, announced that exports of antimony metal fell 57% in the first 5 months of 2006 to 6,810 metric tons (t) compared with 15,985 t in the same period of 2005 (Ryan's Notes, 2006).

References Cited

- Ryan's Notes, 2006, Antimony climbs higher: Ryan's Notes, v. 12, no. 27, July 10, p. 4.
Straits Resources Ltd., 2006, Second quarter report 2006: West Perth, Western Australia, Australia, Straits Resources Ltd., p. 4.

TABLE 1
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2005 ^p	2006	
		First quarter	Second quarter
Production:			
Primary smelter ²	--	--	--
Secondary	W	W	W
Imports for consumption:	29,200	7,990 ^r	6,170 ³
Ore and concentrate	204	10 ^r	35 ³
Metal	6,370	1,780 ^r	1,380 ³
Oxide ⁴	22,700	6,200 ^r	4,760 ³
Exports:	2,420	507 ^r	460 ³
Metal, alloys, and scrap (gross weight)	741	97 ^r	80 ³
Oxide ⁴	1,680	409 ^r	380 ³
Consumption of primary antimony	10,200	2,660 ^r	2,550
Price: Average cents per pound ⁵	160.46	199.25	251.23
Stocks, end of period ⁶	XX	1,970 ^r	2,080

^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

²Nearly all primary smelter output is antimony trioxide.

³Data for April and May only; June data were not available at time of publication.

⁴Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

⁵Source: Platts Metals Week. New York dealer price for 99.5% to 99.6% metal, c.i.f. U.S. ports.

⁶Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY
IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material	2006 ²	
	First quarter ^r	Second quarter
Oxide	1,520	1,630
Other ³	443	443
Total	1,970	2,080

^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who held 42% of the total stocks of antimony at the end of 2004.

³Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY^{1,2}

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2005 ^p	2006 ²	
		First quarter ^r	Second quarter
Oxide	8,590	2,100	2,000
Other ³	1,580	558	557
Total	10,200	2,660	2,550

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Estimated 100% coverage based quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 73% of the total antimony in 2004.

³Includes ores and concentrates, metal, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 4
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL
PRODUCED¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2005 ^p	2006	
		First quarter	Second quarter
Metal ²	W	W	W
Nonmetal ³	W	W	W
Flame-retardants:			
Plastics	371	94 ^r	100
Other ⁴	612	157 ^r	133
Total	982	251 ^r	233
Reported consumption	2,720	739 ^r	712
Total consumption ⁵	10,200	2,660 ^r	2,550

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Reported consumption."

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes adhesives, pigments, rubber, and textiles.

³Includes ammunition, antimonial lead, bearing metals and bearings, cable coverings, castings, sheet and pipe, and solder.

⁴Includes ammunition primers, pigments, ceramics and glass, and plastics.

⁵Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 73% of the total antimony in 2004.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ANTIMONY, BY CLASS AND COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2005 ^{p, 2}	2006				January- May ²
		First quarter	March	April	May	
Ore and concentrate:						
China	147	--	--	--	20	20
Other	57	10	10	11	4	26
Total	204	10	10	11	24	46
Metal:						
China	3,870	1,330	680	219	520	2,070
Mexico	900	146	2	11	258	557
Peru	461	268	173	77	93	438
Other	1,140	31	11	141	60	90
Total	6,370	1,780	866	448	931	3,160
Oxide: ³						
Belgium	1,550	386	161	166	119	671
China	9,510	2,530	442	956	1,340	4,820
Hong Kong	146	--	--	--	--	--
Mexico	9,930	2,350	853	668	722	3,740
Other	1,530	933	204	432	360	1,730
Total	22,700	6,200	1,660	2,220	2,540	11,000
Grand total	29,200	7,990	2,540	2,680	3,490	14,200
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	53	16	16	1	5	23

^pPreliminary. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May include revisions to prior months data.

³Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.